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**COMMISSION ON  
JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE**

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**JAN 12 2009**

**Commission on  
Judicial Performance**

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE**

**INQUIRY CONCERNING JUDGE  
CHRISTOPHER J. SHELDON,**

**No. 186.**

**NOTICE OF FORMAL  
PROCEEDINGS**

To Christopher J. Sheldon, a judge of the Riverside County Municipal Court from October 21, 1989 to January 21, 1992, and of the Riverside County Superior Court from January 23, 1992 to the present:

Preliminary investigation pursuant to Rules of the Commission on Judicial Performance, rules 109 and 111, having been made, the Commission on Judicial Performance has concluded that formal proceedings should be instituted to inquire into the charges specified against you herein.

By the following allegations, you are charged with willful misconduct in office, persistent failure or inability to perform your duties, conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice that brings the judicial office into disrepute, and improper action within the meaning of article VI, section 18 of the California Constitution providing for removal, censure, or public or private admonishment of a judge or former judge, to wit:

### **COUNT ONE**

You have been assigned to the dependency department in Indio since August 2005. The dependency calendar routinely concludes before noon. Since approximately January 2006, you routinely have left the courthouse for the day after the calendar is concluded. You have not informed your superiors of your routine absences during court hours, and have not sought or received authorization for these half-day absences. On occasion, the juvenile delinquency judge in Indio has handled ex parte dependency matters during your afternoon absences. You generally have not sought to make yourself available for other judicial work during these absences.

Your conduct violates the Code of Judicial Ethics, canons 1, 2A, and 3C(1).

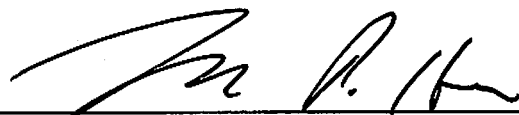
YOU ARE HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE, pursuant to Rules of the Commission on Judicial Performance, rule 118, that formal proceedings have been instituted and shall proceed in accordance with Rules of the Commission on Judicial Performance, rules 101-138.

Pursuant to Rules of the Commission on Judicial Performance, rules 104(c) and 119, you must file a written answer to the charges against you within twenty (20) days after service of this notice upon you. The answer shall be filed with the Commission on Judicial Performance, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 14400, San Francisco, California 94102-3660. The answer shall be verified and shall conform in style to the California Rules of Court, rule 8.204(b). The Notice of Formal Proceedings and answer shall constitute the pleadings. No further pleadings shall be filed and no motion or demurrer shall be filed against any of the pleadings.

This Notice of Formal Proceedings may be amended pursuant to Rules of the Commission on Judicial Performance, rule 128(a).

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE

DATED: 1/5/09

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "F. P. Horn", is written over a horizontal line.

HONORABLE FREDERICK P. HORN  
CHAIRPERSON

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**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE**

**INQUIRY CONCERNING  
JUDGE CHRISTOPHER J. SHELDON,  
NO. 186.**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SERVICE  
OF THE NOTICE OF FORMAL  
PROCEEDINGS**

I, Reginald A. Vitek, on behalf of my client, Judge Christopher J. Sheldon, hereby waive personal service of the Notice of Formal Proceedings in Inquiry No. 186 and agree to accept service by mail. I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Notice of Formal Proceedings by mail and, therefore, that Judge Sheldon has been properly served pursuant to Rules of the Commission on Judicial Performance, rule 118(c).

Dated: 1-9-09

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Reginald A. Vitek  
Attorney for Judge Christopher J. Sheldon,  
Respondent

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